6.3.01 Neutral America - The Church Committee's History of US Intelligence (1976)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QxpFdA7wbkQ (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QxpFdA7wbkQ)

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THE EVOLUTION AND ORGANIZATION OF THE FEDERAL INTELLIGENCE FUNCTION: A BRIEF OVERVIEW
(1776-1975)

Final Report of the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities United States Senate

Book 6, Supplementary Reports on Intelligence Activities

Prepared for the Select Committee by Dr. Harold C. Relyea, Analyst in American National Government, Government and General Research Division, Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress in 1976.

Published by the Committee to "provide a comprehensive compilation of public, unclassified, sources of information on American intelligence activities, and includes a full bibliography."

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Introduction

I. Research Limitations
II. Intelligence Authority

PART ONE: The Small Beginnings (1776-1914)

I. Revolution and Intelligence
II. The New Nation
III. The Mission to Florida
IV. Mexican War
V. Civil War
VI. Allan Pinkerton
VII. William H. Seward
VIII. Lafayette Baker
IX. Grenville M. Dodge
X. Henry Beebee Carrington
XI. Signal Services
XII. Lesser Efforts
XIII. Secret Service
XIV. Armed Forces Intelligence
XV. Spanish-American War

XVI. Post War Developments

PART TWO: The Middle Years (1914-39)

I. Military Intelligence
II. Naval Intelligence
III. Bureau of Investigation
IV. American Protective League
V. Other Factors
VI. Red Scare
VII. American Black Chamber
VIII. Intelligence at Twilight

PART THREE: The National Security Colossus (1939-75)

I. Neutral America
II. Attack
III. Office of Strategic Services
IV. Air Intelligence
V. Military Intelligence
VI. Naval Intelligence
VII. Civilian Intelligence
VIII. Postwar Adjustment
IX. Atomic Energy Commission
X. National Security Council
XI. Central Intelligence Agency
XII. Defense Intelligence
XIII. State Department
XIV. President’s Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board
XV. Loyalty-Security
XVI. Watergate
XVII. Justice Department
XVIII. Treasury Department
XIX. Overview

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[Music] one neutral America with the outbreak of hostilities on the continent the United States remained in a state of peace and qualified neutrality but a policy of detachment from international conflict did not signify that American officials were unaware that the nation's territory resources and politics were subject to penetration and exploitation by the European belligerence during his first term as president Franklin D Roosevelt had become sufficiently concerned about the trafficking's of fascists and communists in the country that he urged Federal Bureau of Investigation director J Edgar Hoover to begin probing the activities of these ideologues footnote see don whitehead the FBI story new york pocketbooks 1958 first published 1956 pages 188 through 197 in footnote quote late in 1938 President Roosevelt had approved a $50,000 appropriation for the FBI to conduct espionage investigations a some later raised by Congress to $300,000 Hoover regarded this authorization of funds by the president as giving primary responsibility in the civilian field to the FBI no similar appropriation was earmarked for any other non-military investigative agency as a result the FBI and the war departments Military Intelligence Division worked out a cooperative program with

approval of the Office of Naval Intelligence to exchange information in subversive investigations this arrangement was approved in principle by the new Attorney General Frank Murphy On February 7th 1939 the assistant to the Attorney General Joseph B Keenan informed other investigative

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B Keenan informed other investigative agencies of the agreement he asked that they send any information regarding espionage or subversion to the FBI Hoover advised his special agents that Keenan's letter meant all complaints relating to espionage counter espionage and sabotage cases should be referred to the bureau should be considered within the primary jurisdiction of Bureau and should of course receive preferred and expeditious attention end quote Keenan's letter elicited angry reactions from the other various federal investigative agencies protesting both the coordination plan and the usurpation of aspects of their jurisdiction by the FBI Assistant Secretary of State George s Messersmith called a conference with war Navy Treasury post office and Justice Department but not FBI representatives and announced that the president had selected him to coordinate probes of foreign agents when this assertion could not be substantiated Messersmith reversed his position advocating that espionage investigations be divided among the various agencies quote Hoover felt that responsibility should be concentrated and at a pattern of close cooperation established war and navy agreed their intelligence units had already asked the FBI to handle within the United States and its territories the civilian aspects of such espionage investigations as they were conducting from the military angle the State Department however felt that its Office of Security must keep unshared control over sensitive information because of its extreme delicacy and its relationship to foreign policy decisions one fact which appears to have weighted the scales in favor of a coordinated plan was that nobody wanted a repetition of the bungling which had during World War one resulted from snarled lines of

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War one resulted from snarled lines of responsibility another was that without coordination various federal bodies might all be keeping tabs on the same individual each from the angle of its own work without the pieces ever being put together to form a pattern end quote footnote Harry and Bonner ro Overstreet the FBI in our open society New York WW Norton & Company 1969 pages 85 and 86 in footnote ultimately it was the president who concluded that espionage counter espionage and sabotage information had to be coordinated accordingly the following directive was issued on June 26th 1939 two members of the cabinet quote it is my desire that the investigation of all espionage counter espionage and sabotage matters be controlled and handled by the Federal Bureau of Investigation of the Department of Justice the Military Intelligence Division of the War Department and the Office of Naval Intelligence of the Navy Department the directors of these three agencies are to function as a committee to coordinate their activities no investigations should be conducted by any investigative agency of the government into matters involving actually or potentially any espionage counter espionage or sabotage except by the three agencies mentioned above I shall be glad if you will instruct the heads of all other investigative agencies than the three named to refer immediately to the nearest office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation any data information or material that may come to their notice bearing directly or indirectly on espionage counter espionage or sabotage end quote this was subsequently followed by another presidential directive pertaining to FBI intelligence responsibilities issued September 6th a few days after formal declarations of war had been made by the European powers

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war had been made by the European powers it said quote the Attorney General has been requested by me to instruct the Federal Bureau of Investigation of the Department of Justice to take charge of investigative work in matters relating to espionage sabotage and violations of the neutrality regulations this task must be conducted in a comprehensive and effective manner on a national basis and all information must be carefully sifted out and correlated in order to avoid confusion and irresponsibility to this end I request all police officers sheriffs and all other law enforcement officers in the United States promptly to turn over to the nearest representative of the Federal Bureau of Investigation any information obtained by them relating to espionage

counter espionage sabotage subversive activities and violations of the neutrality laws end quote on September 8th President Roosevelt declared a national emergency within the nation thereby granting extraordinary powers to the executive short of a condition of war footnote C Frank Murphy executive powers under national emergency Washington US government print office 1939 76th Congress second section Senate document number 133 and footnote quote four months later on January 5th 1942 ver told the House Subcommittee on Appropriations about the steps he had taken to ready the bureau for its intelligence function and also about the consequences of this new assignment and the outbreak of war in Europe as measured in terms of workload the field offices which had been requested earlier by Army and Navy intelligence had been opened in the Canal Zone Puerto Rico and the Philippines field offices had been opened also near six large shipping centers or military bases in Albany Baltimore Savannah Grand Rapids Phoenix

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Baltimore Savannah Grand Rapids Phoenix and San Diego with an eye to preventing espionage and sabotage the Army and Navy had asked the FBI to assume jurisdiction for them over plant production activities in places that manufactured articles for their use a procedure which involved no policing but which was educational and consultative was currently being applied in 540 plants and it was capable of expanding to reach as many as 12,000 in quote a time of greater emergency end quote most plant owners had welcomed it and were giving excellent cooperation at Washington headquarters a general Intelligence Division forerunner of today's domestic intelligence division had been created to coordinate and supervise all work related to espionage sabotage and other subversive activities and violations of the trotty regulations it's translation section made available for use the substance of subversive foreign language communications documents and papers its Code section broke down codes and decoded intercepted messages also special investigations were being made of persons reported to be active in any subversive activity or in movements detrimental to the internal security with reference to those who might have to be more fully investigated in the event of an acute national emergency the results of the special investigations were being kept on filed end quote footnote / Street pages 89 through 90 and footnote still in many other regards the American intelligence community was insufficient to actual needs during the Twilight prior to the nation's entry into the World War as one authority has observed quote as late as 1938 Army

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observed quote as late as 1938 Army counterintelligence in the United States and its possessions abroad consisted of no more than three officers and 18 agents exactly one of whom spoke a foreign language even worse the limited numbers involved in intelligence and counterintelligence included many who had neither the qualifications nor the feel for intrigue frequently career naval and air officers who demonstrated no special aptitude in other branches of service life were relegated to intelligence work simply to be got rid of in 1939 despite memories of the substantial American commitment in the First World War and an awareness that a new war was threatening to follow the earlier pattern the national secret services amounted to very little end quote footnote Richard Wilmer Rouen with Robert G dined or per Secret Service thirty-three centuries of espionage London William Kimber 1969 page 613 end footnote on May 27th 1941 the President issued a second proclamation of national emergency saying in part quote I said on many occasions that the United States is mustering its men and its resources only for purposes of defense only to repel attack I repeat that statement now but we must be realistic when we use the word attack we have to relate it to the lightning speed of modern warfare some people seem to think that we are not attacked until bombs actually drop in the streets of New York or San Francisco or New Orleans or Chicago but they are simply shutting their eyes to the lesson that we must learn from the fate of every nation that the Nazis have conquered the attack on Czechoslovakia began with the conquest of Austria the attack on Norway began with the occupation of Denmark the attack on Greece began with occupation of Albania and Bulgaria the attack on

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of Albania and Bulgaria the attack on the Suez Canal began with the invasion of the Balkans and North Africa and the attack on the United States can begin with the domination of any base which menaces our security north or south nobody can foretell tonight just when the acts of the dictators will ripen into attack in this hemisphere and us but we know enough by now to realize that it would be suicide to wait until they are in our front yard end quote footnote Samuel I Rosenman Kampf the public papers and addresses of Franklin D Roosevelt 1941 volume the call to battle stations New York Harper & Brothers nineteen fifty pages 188 and 189 end footnote the watching and waiting were over America was preparing for war seven months later war was a reality [Music] this is our hidden history you

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